

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** July 26, 2007

**CALLED TO ORDER:** 5:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNED:** 5:45 p.m.

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### ATTENDING MEMBERS

Lonnell Conley, Chairman  
Sherron Franklin  
Ron Gibson  
Dane Mahern  
Lynn McWhirter  
Marilyn Pfisterer  
William Oliver  
Lincoln Plowman

#### ABSENT MEMBERS

Joanne Sanders

### **AGENDA**

PROPOSAL NO. 636, 2006 - amends certain sections of the Revised Code of the Consolidated City and County relating to the Consolidation of the Indianapolis Police Department and the law enforcement division of the Marion County Sheriff's Department  
"Strike" Vote: 6-0

UPDATE ON LAW ENFORCEMENT CONSOLIDATION – Sheriff Frank Anderson and Police Chief Michael Spears

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE**

The Law Enforcement Consolidation Committee of the City-County Council met on Thursday, July 26, 2007. Chairman Lonnell Conley called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. with the following members present: Sherron Franklin, Ron Gibson, Dane Mahern, Lynn McWhirter, and William Oliver. Marilyn Pfisterer and Lincoln Plowman arrived shortly thereafter. Joanne Sanders was absent. General Counsel Aaron Haith was also in attendance.

PROPOSAL NO. 636, 2006 - amends certain sections of the Revised Code of the Consolidated City and County relating to the Consolidation of the Indianapolis Police Department and the law enforcement division of the Marion County Sheriff's Department

Chairman Conley stated that he has been informed by staff that Councillors Franklin and McWhirter have removed their names as sponsors from Proposal No. 636, 2006, thereby leaving the proposal without sponsorship. He stated that in order to remove the proposal from the calendar, a motion to strike would be acceptable.

Councillor Franklin moved, seconded by Councillor Oliver, to send Proposal No. 636, 2006 to the full Council with a recommendation to "Strike." The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

UPDATE ON LAW ENFORCEMENT CONSOLIDATION – Sheriff Frank Anderson and Police Chief Michael Spears

Marion County Sheriff Frank Anderson stated that the department continues to make progress, and the women and men of law enforcement continue to show dedication and professionalism. He said that he is proud that the department has the best of the best. He added that the goal is to make it even better, and he believes even better times can be expected for Indianapolis in the days ahead. He said that they are trying diligently to win the fight on crime and are thankful for the funding that was approved Monday evening that will help them continue that fight. He added that the consolidation has functioned in a bi-partisan fashion, and requests are made in a "needy" manner, rather than a "greedy" manner. He said that in order for the department to provide the best safety the citizens deserve, there is no room in public safety for politics.

Police Chief Michael Spears, Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD), agreed that police officers serve the citizens with great pride and professionalism, putting the needs of others ahead of their own every day. He said that the department has received 361,360 calls for service since the consolidation, and the response time has improved since the beginning of the year. In January, the average response time to

calls for service was seven minutes and 58 seconds. In February, that response time increased slightly to eight minutes and 32 seconds, as they continued to work out staffing issues. Since March, the response time has improved slightly each month with the following numbers: March – 7 minutes, 50 seconds; April – 7 minutes, 40 seconds; May – 7 minutes, 38 seconds; and June – 7 minutes, 33 seconds. He stated that the goal is to continue improving that response time. He said that the average response time may not always decrease, due to the way calls are prioritized. He said that they are constantly aware of emergency and priority calls, but sometimes complaints that are non-emergent will be responded to by the officer assigned to that area after another call has been addressed, in order to help build relationships. He said that the response time should decrease due to the addition of 100 officers which can now be funded thanks to the recent passage of the County Option Income Tax (COIT) proposal. He said that through the end of the year, they have probably 20 to 30 ranking positions leaving and can then hire new officers in at patrol officer levels and will probably be able to fund additional positions due to lower starting salaries.

Chief Spears said that, overall, the crime rate was down at the end of 2006 by 1.35%. In January of 2007, the rate decreased overall 3.69%, 14.23% in February, and 1.95% in March. Through March, the overall crime rate is down 6.07% from 2006.

[Clerk's Note: Councillors Pfisterer and Plowman arrived at 5:10 p.m.]

Chief Spears stated that although there were slight increases in robbery, aggravated assault and residential burglaries, the crime rate average went down due to decreases in auto thefts, larcenies, business burglaries, and incidents of rape. The last statistics they have are as of March, due to official reporting procedures. He said that there is good news and bad news with regard to the homicide rate. Chief Spears said that zero homicides are acceptable, and they try to keep them from happening at all costs. A variety of factors contribute to the homicide rate, including a history of violence, narcotics use, and firearms violations; and they look for these signs and ways to combat these issues to help lower the homicide rate. He said that to date the City has had 62 homicides, compared to 82 homicides at this same time last year, showing a 25% decrease. The good news is that 70.12% of those homicides have been solved, while 61% is the national average. Although this rate is still unacceptable, bringing these criminals to justice helps prevent further incidents because criminals know there are harsh consequences. He said that IMPD monitors crimes daily, and the commanders have to stand before leadership and other commanders to explain the crime in their district and what they are doing to fix it. Chief Spears said that the funding approved on Monday evening will be very helpful for patrol unit investigative initiatives, as it will help with staffing and the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) labor contract. He said that it will also help with equipment needs. The IMPD has over 600 patrol cars that have over 100,000 miles on them, and they are simply wearing out. He said that maintenance costs are outweighing the cost of purchasing new vehicles. He added that extra funds will also help with the purchase of tasers, which will be assigned to officers to help reduce injuries and death. He said that they do not have enough tasers, and want to

equip all uniform field officers with them. He added that this money is also needed to help with radio communication. They were able to purchase 2,000 new radios with grant dollars, and officers are currently in training with these, which should help to relieve some of the communication problems recently experienced. He added that there have been some major improvements in communication since the Metropolitan Emergency Communications Agency (MECA) switched over to the new system.

Chief Spears said that IMPD is currently finalizing an agreement with the FOP to use their promotional list through 2008. There are 1,640 authorized positions with IMPD, and 1,626 currently sworn. He added that there are 110 staff in the manpower pool who are not assigned to full duty: 50 that are probationary and will receive full duty assignments in September, 50 in the training academy, and the remaining 10 who are injured, on leave, or serving military duty. He stated that a new class will begin in October of approximately 80 to 100 officers, the largest class they have ever conducted. He said that 75 officers are expected to leave between now and the end of the year due to the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP). He said that these are pure retirements, and in the past, they have not been able to hire until a person actually left, but they are starting the class two months early to fill these positions. Eighteen of those 75 officers are assigned to run-taking positions. The rest are all supervisor positions, such as captains, sergeants and lieutenants, which can be converted to patrol positions with more positions added. He said that they are actively recruiting another class of approximately 40 to 60 officers to start after the October class in order to keep up with attrition and the growth of the department. Next year, only 15 officers will be lost due to the DROP program, but based on history, they may lose another 20 officers. He said that they will consider another class in March and another after that is completed. These class sizes will be determined by attrition rates. He said that with the funding for 100 new officers being authorized, the goal is to fill 1,740 sworn officer positions, providing 235 more patrol positions than prior to consolidation. He said that if Councillors or the public know of people with an interest in law enforcement, this is an ideal time for them to seek a position in this career.

Chief Spears said that Black Expo is one of the largest events in Downtown, and he is proud of the officers and command staff for the safety provided at this recent event. He said that there were a lot of long days and one unfortunate incident with a 15-year-old young woman discharging a weapon five times, which was resolved quickly. He said that an officer saw the gun and approached the woman, and they believe she discharged it into the air to try and create a diversion and get away. One officer had some damage to hearing because of his proximity to the discharged weapon, and they believe a captain was grazed by a ricochet bullet, but no one was seriously hurt. He said that he believes the curfew enforcement greatly proved its value during this event. One 16-year-old young man taken for a curfew violation had a fully loaded 40-caliber semi-automatic in his possession. That is an instance where it could have been much worse if not for strong enforcement of curfew hours. He said that another large event is coming up with the Brickyard 400, and lots of work and personnel are needed for these types of events.

Chief Spears stated that a lot of progress has been made since the beginning of the year, and the department has had time to digest new policies and procedures of the consolidation. He said that officers have adapted well and overcome obstacles. He believes they are working well together and developing friendships, with very few interpersonal problems. He said that there are still some automotive issues to be addressed during the budget process. Response time is decreasing, but they need to continue to work on improving that time. The crime rate has decreased in five of the eight major categories, but can still be improved upon. He said that they have received lots of compliments on officers and the efficiencies of the consolidation. Chief Spears stated that he recently spoke at a community event, and a Kiwanis executive made the statement at that event that the blending of law enforcement entities was the right move. He invited Council members and the public to attend IMPD Community Days. The new Northwest District will be holding a Community Day on August 1, 2007 at the Guion Middle School at 4401 W. 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. He encouraged citizens and Councillors to attend.

Chairman Conley congratulated the men and women of law enforcement for their extra efforts during events like the Black Expo, the Circle City Classic, and the Indianapolis 500. He said that he often loads his truck up with water bottles and passes them out to officers working in the trenches at these types of events. He has a chance to talk to the officers and knows what long hours they work and how exhausting it can be. He said that these officers have conducted themselves well while keeping the City safe, and he feels they have come a long way. He added that the merger seems to be doing well.

Councillor Franklin referred to Chief Spears' mention of the FOP promotion list and how that many of the officers retiring are sergeants and lieutenants. She asked if there is an excess of these positions already and if the department is top-heavy. Chief Spears said that there are no sergeant or lieutenant vacancies at this time, but they currently have two captain vacancies. He expects another five captain vacancies by the end of the year, but they will definitely use the promotion list in filling these vacancies. He said that when the departments were merged, each department had management positions, and there were some duplicate positions for sergeant and lieutenant that could be consolidated. He said that there was no permanent captain rank in the Sheriff's Department, and the Indianapolis Police Department (IPD) reduced their number of captains and were not permitted to fill some of those positions in 2006. Councillor Franklin stated that IMPD received authorization for 550 Crown Victoria automobiles, and yet the department only bought 225. She asked why they only bought half. Chief Spears stated that he does not know, but will look into that issue. He said that they are pushing hard in 2008 to add 600 new vehicles to their fleet. Sheriff Anderson added that he met yesterday with budget personnel, and they are pushing hard to get cars replaced. Councillor Franklin said that she was wondering if the department was told they could not get the other 225 cars this year for some reason. Sheriff Anderson said that he does not know about that, but Councillor Franklin can rest assured that they are making those demands to replace an aging fleet.

Councillor Pfisterer thanked officers for helping to facilitate the big events and enforcing curfew, as it seems to have been effective. She asked if there is still only one person assigned to recruiting. Chief Spears said that the October class participants have already been recruited. There is a need for more people to recruit, handle background investigations, and train; but they are finding ways to detail officers from their regular job duties to do that work temporarily, as this will not be needed full-time in the future. Councillor Pfisterer asked if the department continues to recruit reserve personnel for large events. Chief Spears said that they are always taking applications for reserve recruits, and a new reserve class will begin in November. Councillor Pfisterer said that she heard about a grant from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that allows cities to hire officers who have already been sworn in in other cities in order to shorten the training time. Chief Spears and Sheriff Anderson stated that they are not familiar with this grant, but will check into it. Councillor Pfisterer said that it seems it would be worth pursuing. She asked if community policing will be fleshed back out to work as it has in the past. Chief Spears said that it is the department's goal to expand community policing out to outlying areas, too, and he agrees it needs to be fleshed out. Sheriff Anderson added that curfew enforcement is a significant tool, and he recently taped a public service announcement to educate parents on following those curfew laws.

Councillor Gibson said that he takes his hat off to officers for a job well done and it appears to him there is a greater police presence on the streets. He asked if this is due to the consolidation or overtime. Chief Spears said that they have enhanced patrol in many areas and are allowing 120 hours per district in overtime. They are concentrating hard on areas where there has been a significant increase in crime. He said that he is proud of those officers, and this is a cost-effective way to cover peaks in activity. Councillor Gibson asked if tasers are more cost-effective than weapons. Chief Spears said that tasers are not inexpensive and cost approximately \$500 to \$600 each. Deputy Chief Eva Talley-Sanders, IMPD, stated that approximately \$320,000 is needed to equip field officers with these tasers. Chief Spears said that these are a better alternative to firearms in some encounters. While there are some cases where taser use has resulted in death, it is usually attributed to other physical conditions of the person on whom the taser is used. He said that normally, taser use has no side effects or long-term effects and is often a better alternative to the use of deadly force.

Councillor Mahern asked if there are still districts where the manpower is lower than it should be since the consolidation. Chief Spears answered in the affirmative. Councillor Mahern asked if the new recruit classes and addition of more patrol officers will help balance this manpower out. Chief Spears stated that it will.

Councillor Oliver asked if there is a professional association for law enforcement that grades departments on their efficiencies. Sheriff Anderson said that before the consolidation, they had already begun an accreditation process where several hundred standards of law enforcement must be met. He said that they are continuing to work on achieving this accreditation, and once they become accredited, they will have to keep

up their standards to maintain it. Councillor Oliver asked if there is any comparative data from other cities on the response time in relation to the number of service calls. Chief Spears said that they do not have such comparative data, and it would be difficult to compare with other cities, because of so many different styles of policing. He said that some cities have immediate dispatch or special phone centers. He said that it is even difficult to compare to the history of Marion County's police force. When he was a young officer, the department promoted a four-minute response time and would send a person across town to respond, even in a non-emergency. He said that calls are prioritized now, so that if the call is non-emergent, and the officer who covers that area is busy with another emergency, they might wait to send that officer when they have completed the current call, simply because that officer knows the neighborhood and its needs and is establishing relationships with its citizens. He said that this sometimes causes the data to reflect a slower response time, but it is difficult to compare with actual emergency response time. Councillor Oliver asked if the increase in the number of officers means that many will have to endure longer with below-standard cars. Chief Spears said that new officers do not get their own automobile for a year. They will issue cars in a probationary period if they are available, but the new officers would not normally receive a car until after that period. He added that with 600 new vehicles being budgeted, he believes there will be no problem with supplying the entire force with cars. He said that new officers, however, would receive the older vehicles through a roll-down process, while veteran officers would get the newer vehicles.

There being no further business, and upon motion duly made, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Lonnell Conley, Chairman

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